

## ABSTRACT

A preferred handguard for a rifle includes a pair of essentially identical half-grip pieces each having an elongated body with a generally triangular lateral cross-section, including two exterior sides and a mating side. The exterior sides of the triangular cross-section are formed substantially at a right angle to each other. The mating side of the triangular cross-section is centrally hollowed and has outer edges that form a mating surface for mating with the other half-grip piece to enclose an air space surrounding a section of the rifle barrel. Longitudinally extending accessory mounting rails are formed on each of the exterior sides and are recessed in the half-grip piece such that the rails are located inside a laterally extended generally semi-octagonal outline defined by an end wall. Removable elastomeric rail covers that replicate the semi-octagonal outline are provided to form a substantially continuous shape with the end wall.